UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/C.5/47/50
16 November 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-seventh session
FIFTH COMMITTEE
Agenda items 104 and 61 (1)

PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993

GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT: TRANSPARENCY IN ARMAMENTS

Transparency in armaments

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.18

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

1. At its 31st meeting, held on 12 November 1992, the First Committee adopted without a vote draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.18. A statement of programme budget implications was before the Committee in document A/C.1/47/L.44.

A. Requests contained in the draft resolution

2. Under the terms of operative paragraph 6 of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.18, the General Assembly would reaffirm its request to the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the continuing operation of the Register of Conventional Arms and its further development with the assistance of a group of governmental experts to be convened in 1994 on the basis of equitable geographical representation.

3. By operative paragraph 7, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to ensure that sufficient resources are made available for the United Nations Secretariat to operate and maintain the Register.

B. Relationship of the request to the approved programme of work

4. The above request is related to major programme I, Maintenance of peace and security, disarmament and decolonization, programme 7, Disarmament, of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 as proposed for revision. 1/ Related activities were initially programmed and approved under subprogramme 3, Monitoring, analysis and studies, of section 5, Disarmament, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993, 2/ responsibility for which was transferred to the Department of Political Affairs following the restructuring of the Secretariat. Proposals for transfer of related resources to section 37, Department of Political Affairs, have been submitted to the General Assembly in the Secretary-General's revised estimates (A/C.5/47/2 and Corr.1).

C. Activities by which the request would be implemented

5. Should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, the Secretary-General would convene in 1994 a meeting of a group of governmental experts on the basis of equitable geographical representation and prepare, with the assistance of the group, a report on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development.

6. The Office for Disarmament Affairs of the Department of Political Affairs would receive and compile for the Secretary-General's annual report data sheets submitted by Member States and establish a computerized database that would store the reported data. In accordance with the annex to General Assembly resolution 46/36 L of 9 December 1991, the first registration of data on imports and exports of conventional arms will take place by 30 April 1993 in respect of the calendar year 1992.

D. Modifications required in the approved programme of work for 1992-1993

7. The activities called for by the draft resolution would fall under subparagraphs 1 (v) and 3 (iv) of subprogramme 3 of section 5, the activities of which are now the responsibility of the Department of Political Affairs as indicated in paragraph 4 above. Accordingly, no modifications would be required.

E. Additional requirements at full cost

8. With respect to the request contained in operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution, since the group of governmental experts would be convened in 1994, related requirements would be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

9. With respect to the request contained in operative paragraph 7 of the draft resolution, it is anticipated that the initial operation and storage of the data of the Register, as currently envisaged, could be accommodated through the hardware and software for which provision has been made for the Office for Disarmament Affairs. In the report of the Secretary-General on the Arms Register (A/47/342 and Corr.1) it was further indicated that an additional $50,000 would be required to cover incremental start-up costs of computer hardware and software required for system development and testing.

10. The development, upgrading and maintenance of the Register would require staff from the Office for Disarmament Affairs with politico-military expertise, especially in the area of arms transfers, in combination with highly specialized knowledge in the field of database management and systems analysis. Such expertise is currently not available within the Office for Disarmament Affairs. In addition, the day-to-day operation of the Register would require one General Service staff member experienced in the basics of programming. It was anticipated therefore that the development, upgrading and maintenance of the Register would require three additional staff: one P-5, one P-2 and one General Service staff member.

11. On the basis of the above considerations, the additional requirements at full cost of $171,300 that would arise in connection with the operation and maintenance of the Register are estimated as follows:

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(a)	Acquisition of computer hardware and software for system development (start-up costs)	50 000
(b)	Salary and common staff costs of three additional posts (1 P-5, 1 P-2 and 1 General Service/other level)	121 300
	Total (a) and (b)	171 300

F. Potential for absorption

12. Should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, it is the Secretary-General's understanding that, at this initial stage, only limited resources would be required in 1993 to launch the Register and initiate its operation. Those resources would include one Professional and one General Service staff member. In this connection, the Secretary-General would propose to redeploy temporarily in 1993 a post at the P-4/P-5 level available for such redeployment in the context of the new treatment of vacancies (A/C.5/47/2, para. 2). An amount of $29,500 in general temporary assistance to finance one General Service (other level) staff member would also be required in 1993. In addition, $50,000 would be required for computer hardware and software for system development and testing. It is anticipated that electronic data-processing resources currently available to the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the Department of Political Affairs would be sufficient to cover other

requirements related to the Register during 1993. Longer-term staffing and other requirements for the Register would be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

G. Indication of additional requirements

13. Accordingly, should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.18, it is estimated that additional requirements of $79,500 would arise under section 37 of the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993.

H. Contingency fund

14. It will be recalled that, under the procedure established by the General Assembly in its resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986, a contingency fund is established each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the proposed programme budget. Under the same procedure, if additional expenditures are proposed that exceed resources available from the contingency fund, these activities can be implemented only through redeployment of resources available from low-priority areas or modifications of existing activities. Otherwise, such additional activities will have to be deferred until a later biennium. A consolidated statement of all programme budget implications and revised estimates will be submitted to the General Assembly towards the end of the current session.

15. No activity has been identified for termination, deferral, curtailment or modification under section 37 of the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993. Should it not prove possible to meet the costs required from the contingency fund, the implementation of the draft resolution would have to be postponed, as provided for in the guidelines for the use and operation of the contingency fund adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 42/211 of 21 December 1987.

I. Summary

16. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.18, it is estimated that additional appropriations for $79,500 would be required under section 37 of the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993.

Notes

1/ A/47/6 (Prog. 7) and E/AC.51/L.5/Add.13.

2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/46/6/Rev.1), vol. I, as modified by A/C.5/46/44.